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a processor for retrieving in near real-time and updating at least one data set in the storage module; and

an analysis module for analyzing the data and providing the results of the analysis to a user, said analysis module identifying a proposed route calculated based on risk analysis including data selected from the group consisting of an optimal shipment route, an emergency condition determination, an emergency response, and as applicable, a projected plume dispersion, said projected plume dispersion being related to the emergency condition determination, wherein the plume dispersion is calculated based on shipment data, geographic positioning data, and near real-time weather data specific to the emergency condition and physical location of the goods.

6. (Amended) The system of Claim 1 wherein data on the route and along all possible alternative routes includes population density and distribution, political boundaries, environmental boundaries, surface inclination and topology, road surface type, road dimensions, road height and weight limitations, road authorizations for cargo types, and road segment distances.

10. (Amended) A method for managing a shipment of hazardous material goods, comprising:

obtaining shipment data containing information about the goods;

determining optimal and alternate routes for transport of the goods;

obtaining geographic positioning data about the location of the goods as they travel from a starting location to a distribution location;

using the geographic positioning data to select weather data related to the location of the goods;

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monitoring the shipment with regard to transport progress and to detect an emergency condition, wherein monitoring the shipment includes providing projected plume dispersion, if applicable, in response to the emergency condition, wherein the plume dispersion is calculated based on shipment data, geographic positioning data, and near real-time weather data specific to the emergency condition and physical location of the goods;

calculating a recommended response to a detected emergency condition; and
automatically notifying database-defined emergency response authorities.

23. (Amended) A method for management of shipment of hazardous materials, said method comprising:

obtaining weather data, shipment data, and geographic positioning data related to the shipment;

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determining optimal and alternate routes, and determining a proposed route calculated based on a risk analysis that consists of an impedance type module which summarizes resistance of a route and which selects the lowest resistance route;

sensing an emergency condition for the hazardous materials during the shipment;

calculating an emergency hazardous condition and extent based on the weather data, shipment data and geographic positioning data, wherein calculating an emergency hazardous condition includes providing projected plume dispersion, if applicable, in response to the emergency condition, wherein the plume dispersion is calculated based on shipment data, geographic positioning data, and near real-time weather data specific to the emergency condition and physical location of the goods; and

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wherein the emergency hazardous condition and extent is determined remotely based on the geographical position of the shipment.

25. (Amended) The method of Claim 23 wherein data on a route and along all possible alternative routes includes population density and distribution, political boundaries, environmental boundaries, surface inclination and topology, road surface type, road dimensions, road height and weight limitations, road authorizations for cargo types, and road segment distances.

29. (Amended) A management system for shipment of goods, the system comprising:

a network for retrieving shipment data, geographical positioning data and near real-time weather data;

an optimal route module for determining a best route based on relevant static and dynamic considerations; and

an emergency assessment module for projecting emergency conditions likely to be created in the event of an emergency condition of the goods as a function of retrieved data and recommended alterations to the route based on these conditions, wherein the emergency assessment module calculates an anticipated plume dispersion, if applicable, of the goods related to the emergency condition, the dispersion being calculated based on shipment data, geographic positioning, geospatial data and weather data.

31. (Amended) The system of claim 29 wherein the route module identifies a proposed route calculated based on risk analysis that consists of an impedance type mod I which summarizes "resistance" of a route and which selects the lowest

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"resistance" path.

32. (Amended) The system of claim 29 wherein data on the route and along all possible alternative routes includes population density and distribution, political boundaries, environmental boundaries, surface inclination and topology, road surface type, road dimensions, road height and weight limitations, road authorizations for cargo types, and road segment distances.

36. (Amended) The system of claim 29 further comprising a sensor for monitoring the shipment, said sensor detecting the emergency condition.